

HE WON'T QUIT SMOKING

By Jerry Rabushka

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HE WON'T QUIT SMOKING

A Ten Minute Comedy Skit

By Jerry Rabushka

SYNOPSIS: Light up your audience with this pack of laughs about a serious topic. When Boyce starts smoking, his whole life changes to getting that next cigarette. Will his girlfriend Melinda dump him, or will she hang outside the Seven-Eleven while he bums cigs from older guys? When he decides in favor of cigarettes, she has to “clear the air.”

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(2-3 females, 2 males; doubling possible)

MELINDA (f) High school aged. *(33 lines)*

BOYCE (m) Her boyfriend who smokes, 16 years old. *(26 lines)*

MOM (f) Melinda’s mother. Who disapproves of smoking. *(14 lines)*

OLD LADY (f) An elderly woman. *(3 lines)*

CANYON SCRUMBLE (m) A 7-11 clerk, also 16. *(12 lines)*

CAST NOTE: Old Lady may be played by Mom.

SETTING: A convenience store.

COSTUMES

MELINDA – Dresses in current teen girl attire.

BOYCE – Dresses in current teen boy attire.

MOM – Dresses in current mother attire.

OLD LADY – Dresses as elderly woman, wearing a hat or scarf. Could have a wig or cane.

CANYON SCRUMBLE – Convenience store clerk uniform.

MELINDA: *(To audience.)* I had a boyfriend Boyce who smoked. It was gross, but he was my boyfriend, and I liked to pretend I was in love. He was dangerous – he smoked, after all! My mom said in her day everybody smoked, and in her dad and granddad’s day... well...there’s no one left to tell. Since Boyce was 16, he had to find older people to buy cigarettes for him, so not only was he a rule breaker, we were hanging around with *(This is exciting!)* “older boys.” They were even more dangerous and better yet, they were...older boys. I mean, they smoked, legally. Or he’d ask our classmate, Canyon Scrumble, the dude with the “older brother.”

BOYCE enters, and runs into CANYON who comes in from another part of the stage.

BOYCE: Hey Scrumble, can the bigger bro hook me up with a pack of cigs?

MELINDA: He said that all the time, until one day Canyon slammed the door...

MELINDA moves aside to watch CANYON and BOYCE.

CANYON: You never paid him for the last pack.

BOYCE: I don’t have a job.

CANYON: Then get a job or quit smoking.

MELINDA: *(To audience.)* That didn’t go over well, but he wasn’t about to quit. He’d just find new guys to hang out with until they got tired of him bumming a light. One day, Canyon got a job at the local convenience store...

CANYON goes behind a counter, or pantomimes getting ready to wait on customers.

MELINDA: and Boyce was all over him trying to get him to sell a pack of smokes.

BOYCE: *(We can tell they’re at the store and he’s been nagging for a while.)* Come on Scrumble, you can do it.

MELINDA: *(To audience.)* But he didn’t. *(Moves aside to watch CANYON and BOYCE.)*

CANYON: I can't sell you cigarettes until you're 18. And the legal age is probably going up next year.

BOYCE: (*A little whiny.*) I won't tell...you're such a follower.

CANYON: There are cameras everywhere. If the store sells you a pack of cigs I lose my job and they get hauled into court. So, I can't, man. You need to get a friend to pick up a pack.

BOYCE: They won't fire you. Besides I look 19. I have a mustache.

CANYON: (*Looks closely.*) I can't see it.

MELINDA: (*Goes in to look, disappointed.*) Neither could I.

BOYCE: I do! It's light and long, like the cigarettes you won't sell me!

MELINDA: Meanwhile I'm standing by the soda fountain feeling really stupid, like I'm supposed to do something about it. Mom wasn't happy either.

MOM: (*Offstage.*) Melinda!

MOM enters and pulls MELINDA out of the store; she gives CANYON a dirty look and CANYON begins to walk offstage with BOYCE following him, still being a pest.

BOYCE: Canyon.....

CANYON: No!

BOYCE and CANYON exit.

MOM: You shouldn't date a boy who smokes. It's filthy. It's nasty. It's dirty.

MELINDA: Dad smoked when you married him.

MOM: He doesn't any more.

MELINDA: How did you make him quit.

MOM: I gave him a choice. Cigarettes or divorce.

MELINDA: Really? How long did that take?

MOM: Grounded! (*Turns away and exits.*)

BOYCE: (*Enters, randomly begging.*) Will anyone give me a cigarette? How hard is this? (*Sees someone offstage.*) There's a nice old lady. Ma'am can I bum a light?

OLD LADY: (*Enters.*) You're a bum! I'm not going to feed your disgusting habit and have you turn out like my husband.

BOYCE: How did he turn out?

OLD LADY: Dead, and it took far too long.

BOYCE: I can't help but notice you're holding a flask, so you're not one to judge other people's habits.

OLD LADY: (*Stern.*) I'm grownup and it's not a habit, it's an affectation. You kids don't understand the meaning of words.

BOYCE: I just want a cigarette!

During MELINDA'S following speech, BOYCE follows OLD LADY around badgering her while she tries to get away from him.

MELINDA: This went on time after time, and most of our dates were all about him finding someone to give him a cigarette and a place to smoke it.

OLD LADY exits running. BOYCE exits following her.

MELINDA: There's only so much time you want to spend outside a 7-11 in the middle of winter before you start to get angry and you come home frozen.

MOM: (*Enters.*) Melinda, you're practically petrified. What have you been doing?

MELINDA: Nothing.

MOM: When a teenager says nothing, it's something.

MELINDA: It's Boyce. He just wants to stand around and smoke with older boys.

MOM: Then you're breaking up with him.

MELINDA: I'm not!

MOM: You are. I'm your mother.

MELINDA: I don't know what that has to do with anything.

MOM: "I'm your mother" means you'll do what you're told no matter if I'm right or wrong. I thought we established that when you were three.

MELINDA: That's no fair! You're using self-identification as a behavior modification technique.

MOM: That's what's cool about being your mother. I get my way. This relationship needs to go up in smoke. It's that or you're off the cheerleading squad.

BOYCE enters and pantomimes smoking.

MELINDA: *(To audience.)* Well, she was my mother, after all. So... after a week of sitting out the squad and watching Boyce light up, I told him he had to make a choice. It's cigarettes or me.

BOYCE: That's not fair. *(Coughs.)*

MELINDA: Take it up with my mom. She's my mother.

BOYCE: What does that have to do with it?

MELINDA: I just told you. She's my mother. So it would be really nice if you would stop smoking, at least until I move out of the house.

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